

A

SERMON,

PREACHED

At the Cathedral Church, and St. *Andrew's*,
in *Norwich*, on *Tuesday January 30, 1738.*

Being the Day appointed to be observed as the Day of

MARTYRDOM

O F

King Charles I.

By ROBERT LEEKE, B. D. Rector of *Great Snoring*
in *Norfolk*, and late Fellow of *St. John's College in Cambridge.*

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S E R M O N

At the Church of St. Andrew, New York, on Sunday, the 10th of May, 1818.



M A R T Y R D O M

O F

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Rom. XIII. I, 2.

Let every Soul be subject unto the higher Powers: For there is no Power but of God. The Powers that be, are ordained of God.

Whosoever therefore resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves Damnation.

IN the Chapter before us, the Apostle delivers to us Two very clear Sentiments concerning Civil Government; the one is, that whatever Person or Persons are deputed to be Civil Governors by the Legal Constitution, to such God lends his own Authority for the better Support of Civil Government.

The other is, that Civil Government was appointed by God for the Good of Mankind: Rulers are designed by God to be Ministers to the People for their Good, a Terror to none but Evil-Doers: God thus lending his own Authority to the Support of Civil Government in general, and going along with the Governors of it in Execution of all their legal Powers, it follows plainly that we are bound to submit, not only out of Dread of the Anger of our Civil Governors, but out of a Sense of Duty we owe to this as every other Command of God: And the Punishment with God for resisting Legal Authority is, without sincere Repentance, Damnation in the other World; *they that resist, shall receive to themselves Damnation.*

From the Words before us, I shall endeavour to shew what Measures of Obedience are due from the Subject to the Government under which we live.

II. Shew that the horrid Wickedness of this Day was one of the most crying Acts of Rebellion that ever was committed, to be justified on no Principle either of Civil or Divine Law.

III. I shall draw some Observations from the History before us, which may be of use to regulate our future Behaviour.

First then, I am to shew what Measures of Obedience are due from the Subject to the Government under which we live.

The Apostle, we may observe, speaks nothing of the Degrees or Measures of Obedience due from the Subject to the Civil Rulers; nor yet Anything of the several Sorts of Civil Governments then, as now, subsisting in the World: From whence we are left to judge, that every State or Kingdom in the World is left by God at Liberty to please themselves in their own Forms of Civil Governments; and when they have done so, to settle in a legal Manner what Degrees of Obedience shall be due from the Subject to the Civil Rulers over them. All that the Apostle hath said is, that Civil Government is the Will of God, enacted by him for the Good of Mankind, what he does and will support by his own Authority, with the Rewards and Fears of another World: And agreeable to this written Account of God's Word, every Voice of Reason speaks within us; for as we are made indigent, rational, and social Creatures by God, Society, Conversation, and a mutual Commerce with one another, are as necessary for the Supports and Comforts of rational and social Life, as Eating and Drinking is for the animal: On these Accounts Civil Government is necessary for the Support of that Society, and with Civil Government a due Obedience on the Part of the Subject.

For my part, I cannot possibly see that ever our Saviour, or any of his Apostles, intended to alter the Frame of any Civil Government subsisting in the World in their Times, either to enlarge or lessen the Power of the Civil Rulers, or to abridge the Rights of the Subject whatever they were: They looked at and submitted themselves to the Powers then in Being, and confirmed their Establishment in so doing.

And least the *Jews* (who were principally concerned in this Advice of the Apostle) should think themselves exempt from paying

ing Obedience to the Heathen Governors, to whom they were then made subject, the Apostle without any Exception to their particular Case declares in general, that *all Power was from God*; therefore the *Roman* Governors then in Possession of Civil Authority, so long as they ruled in Justice and Mercy, were as much the Ordinance of Heaven as ever had been the *Jewish* Rulers or any other: The *Jews* were unwilling to believe this, because they had a Law of their own which forbid them to elect an Heathen Governor over them; but this hindered not but that God, whenever he pleased, might carry that People into Governments where the Rulers were not of their own Election; which was their present Case under the *Roman* Government, and had been before under their former Captivities: And whilst the Apostle persuades them to submit to these Governors, he gives such a Reason for it as plainly shews that all sort of *Legal* Civil Governments stand upon an equal Foot, all upon Divine Authority: *The Powers that be*, whether in Heathen then or Christian Hands, if they are settled according to the Laws of each Country, have the Authority of God with them, enacted by him for the Support of Mankind against the general Calamities of Human Nature. And is it not very observable, that when the Apostle pressed this Advice of Obedience to the *Roman* Governors both upon *Jews* and *Christians*, it should be in the Reigns either of *Claudius* or *Nero*? neither of whom had Anything to recommend them, that I know of, but being the Powers in Possession: They were then the *Πρεσβυται εξουσιαι* at *Rome*, and as such had the Trust of Authority lodged with them by the State for the Good of the People; and with this Trust of the State, goes the Authority of God in the Judgment of our Apostle. The same Advice our Saviour had given before to the *Jews* under *Tiberius*, who was no better Governor than the Two that followed; and all their Titles put together to the Imperial Crown could be no other than that of their Great Predecessor *Augustus*, of whom the best Historians relate that he obtained the Crown neither by Inheritance, nor Usurpation, nor Conquest, nor Election, and yet perhaps by Means of them all; for after the Senate had struggled long to preserve their Liberties, but in vain, they came into a Vote at length to make *Octavius* sole Monarch of *Rome*; but even the Vote itself was obtained with much Fraud, Force, and Flattery; far from being an hearty Concurrence in that Matter: Because we see in a Reign or

two that followed, before *Claudius* could obtain the Crown, a strong Attempt was made in the Senate to recover their Liberties, and extinguish the very Name of *Cesar*; but the People not joining the Senate in the Attempt, *Claudius* was at length declared Emperor by a Vote in the Senate: And this Title of *Augustus*, with all the *Cesars* that succeeded him down to the Time of *Nero*, (most probably) when the Apostle wrote this Discourse of Non-Resistance, was confirmed by Divine Authority; as all those in their several Successions became *the Powers in Being*, they were declared to be from God.

And from the above-mentioned Truths we see plainly, that since God wills that Civil Government should be, and yet does not in any State or Kingdom direct the Person or Persons (as he did of old by Messages delivered to his Prophets) who shall govern, it must be left to the Constitution of every State or Kingdom to determine that Matter within themselves; and whatever Governor or Governors are so created, from their very Creation they are invested with *Powers from God*; and Resistance to them in the Execution of Legal Authority, is resisting at the same Time the Will and Order of God.

Again, The Apostle leaving the Matter general, with regard to the Measures of Obedience due from the Subject to the Civil Rulers, as he had done before with regard to the Nomination of the Persons who should rule in every State or Kingdom, gives us Leave to say, that there is nothing in Command from God which forbids any People to make Choice of one or more Persons to govern them; and in such Choice they may either subject their natural Rights to his or their Controul, either in Whole or in Part: A People at first may do by their Governors, as Servants do by their Masters, make as wise a Bargain for themselves as they can; and Civil Governors in one Case, like Masters in the other, thus constituted with limited Powers, have no larger Authority than can be claimed in Vertue of the original Bargain, or by subsequent Concessions made to them; and from such a Contract made, all the Rights claimed on both Sides become legal Rights; and, as I said before, it was plainly not the Design of the Christian Religion to take away any Civil Rights legally claimed either by Prince or People.

And I do apprehend, that whatever Governor shall attempt to take away the legal Rights of the Subject, from such Attempt the
Subjects

Subjects may lawfully defend themselves; and Resistance in such a Case cannot be wrong, because they break no Right on the Side of Government; nay, such Resistance deserves the Honourable Name of *Self-Defence*, which both God and Nature allow to every one against grievous Injuries: And moreover, Resistance in such a Case is in plain Construction no more than a Denial to part with their natural and legal Rights, which whether a People will or no must be left to their own Discretions; and whilst they defend themselves in such Cases, they break no Law either of Nature, Civil Constitution, or Revelation. And with Regard to our own particular Constitution it cannot be said, with any Colour of Reason, that absolute Passive Obedience is due to every Command of the Prince; for he is declared by Law to be a limited Monarch, the Nobility by Rights inherent, and the Commons by Election, sharing the Sovereignty with him; and we must in general look at the Acts of All Three united, for the Measures of our Obedience: These Three indeed have absolute Supreme Power within themselves, so far as any Civil Government can have it; and therefore Passive Obedience, in a very large Sense of the Word, is due to them; that is, to every Law of the Land, not contrary to the higher Law of God; which certainly is, and ought to be the Rule of Behaviour both to Prince and People. And I do not understand how any one can maintain Passive Obedience, in this Constitution, in any other Sense; for nothing can be a plainer Truth than this, that where the Prerogative of the Prince is limited, there must Obedience be so too in the Subject.

To conclude this Head, God Almighty seems to have given no other special Matters in Charge with regard to the Obedience of the Subject to Civil Rulers, than what he hath given concerning Children to Parents, and Servants to Masters; in all these the Command is general, but strictly enjoins that all these relative Duties to each other be executed under a Tie of Conscience, with the Hopes and Fears of another World: And indeed we know nothing of the Temper and Genius of our Holy Religion, if we think it does not order us to bring every Trust, and almost every Action, as well as Relation in Life, under its happy Influence; but this hinders not but that Servants may settle beneficial Terms for themselves with their Masters, and the Laws of the Land give Rights to Children that their Parents cannot take from them; in like Manner Subjects may reserve many natural Rights to themselves, not
subject

subject to the Controul of Civil Governors; and when the Terms of Agreement are settled thus on both Sides, it is at the Peril of either Side before God if they break them: And I think a greater Motive need not be used to secure to Civil Rulers the Obedience of the Subject, than by producing the written Word of God in Proof, that whosoever shall resist Civil Rulers in the Execution of their Legal Powers, will not only deservedly incur the high Displeasure of such Ruler or Prince, but may be damned for such Crime, as well as any other, without Repentance, in the next World.

I cannot leave this Head, without observing that the highest Titles of Honour are bestowed in Scripture by God on Civil Rulers; *I have said*, says he, *Ye are Gods*; intended by God to distribute the Blessings of his Goodness, like the Sun in the Firmament, through all Parts of Government: Imagine therefore with yourselves what Respect and Worship is due to their Persons and Authority who thus bear the fairest Image of the God above, and have innumerable Rights (or Trusts rather) lodged with them both by God above and the People below, the better to enable them to carry on the necessary Work of Government.

I proceed 2dly to shew, that the horrid Rebellion for which on this Day we deprecate the Wrath of God, and the abominable Murder of the King that followed it, both together were such a Series of Wickedness as are to be excused from no Principle either of Divine or Human Law.

And here let us proceed with all the Moderation that Religion teaches, and be very careful that we do not lay in the wrong Place that great Load of Guilt that belongs to the Day and the Times before it. Some Writers have drawn the King's Picture at full Length, without any Fault or Shade in it; but such a Form of Goodness belongeth not to the King, or any Man else, except JESUS CHRIST. As he was a Man, he was liable to Mistakes, and fell into them doubtless; nay, it must be owned, that there were exercised some high Acts of Power in the Reign of this good Prince, such as all good Men wished had been let alone: Whether these proceeded from a Design to alter the Constitution, or from a Mistake about the legal Extent of the Prerogative, we cannot certainly tell; but in all Probability they proceeded from pure Mistake, because in all other Respects (two or three Cases excepted, which

which will bear a doubtful Construction) he appeared to be one of the best of our Kings; yea, as good a Man as any in the Age in which he lived.

The Cases ordinarily referred to, were the Project of Ship-Money, the Proceedings of the Council-Table, and Star-Chamber; which, whether legal or no, were certainly high Burdens upon the Subject, and became the proper Guardians of our Liberties to put a Stop to, by such Methods as the Constitution would allow.

Hear the Noble Historian on the Acts of the Council-Table and Star-Chamber: *Whatever pleased them they called Honourable, and whatever profited they called Just; the Council-Table by Proclamation injoining to the People what was not enjoined by Law, the Star-Chamber all the Time censuring the Disobedience to these Proclamations by very great Fines and Imprisonments: So that in no Times were the Foundations of Right, by which Englishmen valued their Security, in more Danger of being destroyed.*

For such Proceedings as these no just Excuse can be made, at least for the Behaviour of the Persons that presided in these Courts; but whether the Jurisdiction of the Courts themselves were at that Time founded on Law or no, is a Matter not easily to be determined: And in Favour of them it may be said, that such Courts were well known in this Kingdom before the Reign of this unhappy Prince; and it is certain as high Acts of Power had been exercised in these very Courts in the Reign even of good Queen *Elizabeth*, as could be produced in the Reign before us; all which, to be sure, greatly excused His Majesty for endeavouring to uphold the Jurisdiction of them. Moreover that the good King, however mistaken, might convince the Subject that he did not really intend to enlarge the Prerogative beyond its just Bounds, he submitted to have the Ship-Money argued as a Point of Law before his Twelve Judges, of whom the far greater Part asserted the King's Right to impose it.

Nothing could be fairer on the King's Side; therefore after such Judgment given, whatever Grievance remained ought to be charged on those who falsely gave it the Authority of Law: But, alas! it happened that what the good King intended for the Quiet of the Subject, became Matter of the greatest Uneasiness; for before it had been determined to be Matter of Law to pay the Ship-Money, the Subject in general was willing to pay it, out of a personal Respect to the King; but when in the Debate in Law upon the

Demand, the People heard Reasons of State urged to the Judges as Matters of Law, and Judgment of Law grounded by them on Matters of Fact, for which there was neither Inquiry nor Proof, and no Reason given at last for the Payment of the Money, but what included the Payment of the last Shilling of their Estates whenever the King should demand it, from such Proceedings as these it must be owned the Nation in general grew very uneasy.

And certain it is, as soon as the People have Reason to believe that the sworn Oracles and Interpreters of the Law are ready to concur with every Act of Power the Crown shall set up, and become so complaisant as to declare that the Regal Power may supply on emergent Occasions the want of an Act of Parliament in raising Money on the Subject, then is the Time (whenever it hath been, or shall be again) that the Subject ought to look at the Authority of Parliament to deliver them from their just Fears.

And from this Root sprung a great deal of the Mischief that ensued. And if the Judges gave the Opinion they did, either to oblige the Crown, or for any other Reason but out of a conscientious Regard to what was really the Law of the Land, they deserved scarcely a milder Punishment than the execrable Judges afterwards did who sat in Judgment on the King's Person: I do not well know, which would have been the worst Men; the one were guilty of the Murder of the Best of Kings, the other (by striking at all the Liberties of the People of *England* at once) gave the first Blow to the Murder of the Best of Constitutions. And if it should be allowed that the King himself deserved some Blame in these Matters, yet all who know Anything of true History know that the King on his Part redressed all real Grievances, gave up all disputed Claims, as fast as Bills could be prepared for him, long certainly before the War broke out: Enough he did before that Time to secure firm the Liberties of the People, and answer the Expectations of all good Men; therefore they who took up Arms against the King, after such kind Concessions made, are justly to be charged with all the Calamities, Mischiefs, and Murder that ensued.

And from this Fact, that Arms were taken up against the King, after he had made all reasonable Concessions on his Side, a Fact supported by best History, it is that we must form the true Judgment concerning the Justice or Injustice of the War; the whole Hinge of the Controversie turns here; yea, it is certain further, that where the Injustice of the War falls, there falls with it all the Guilt of the Miseries and Murder that attended it. For

For had the King, now of Blessed Memory, insisted upon high Acts of Power against the very Frame of the Constitution, and had resolved to maintain such Acts of Power with Force of Arms, no one could have blamed the Parliament, the general Guardians of the Liberties of the People, had they and the People together joined in Defence of their Privileges.

For the Law of Nature allows of Self-Defence, against Injuries of all Sorts; and neither the Civil Constitution of our Country, nor any Law of God (that I know of) says Anything to the contrary: But since it was far otherwise with the Behaviour of the Good KING to his Parliament, since he gave up intirely every Branch of the Prerogative which was liable to be abused to arbitrary Purposes, since he did Everything in Time to allay even the most jealous Fears of the Subject, they who took up Arms against him, after such indulgent Concessions, stand chargeable in all Reason and Justice with all the Guilt of the Calamities and Murder that ensued. And accordingly we find, as soon as the War broke out, all the Flower of the Nobility and Gentry of the Kingdom, the Two Universities, with all the well-educated Part of the Kingdom both in Learning and Religion, took Part with the KING. On the other Side went the Atheistical and Prophane, the whole Body of the *Secularies* of whatever Denomination; with these a great Number of Popish Priests, both from within and without the Kingdom, imported hither to help on the general Confusion; and every other Person that were Enemies, I will not say to the King, but to the Constitution as happily settled in Monarchy and Episcopacy. For the Truth of what I say, I appeal to no dark Memoirs, but well attested History; amongst whom *the Noble Historian* hath observed, that the King fought with a rebellious Enemy on very unequal Terms, insomuch that he was a Loser by every Victory he gained: His Army being an Army of Gentlemen, the Loss of one of his Men was of more Account than a whole Regiment of Prisoners taken from the other Side, where lay chiefly the *Refuse* and *Scum* of the People.

During the Prosecution of the War, the King behaved with all imaginable Gentleness of Nature, not forgetting that he was a Father of those Children that rebelled against him; protesting on all Occasions, both to Friends and Enemies, that he desired Peace on no other Terms than whilst he inviolably observed all the Laws granted to the Parliament for the Security of the Publick: Nor was

there the least Reason to doubt what he said; for no one in his Dominions understood Religion better than himself, or practised it more regularly in all its Offices.

These were general good Reasons for relying upon his Word and Honour, but there were greater than these; namely, that he was never known to make use of Religion to cover Falshood or Injustice with on any Occasion: This was a Piece of Villainy peculiar to his Enemies, who to be sure, when they were plotting such Mischiefs as even Hell itself would blush at, then did they smile and fawn upon Heaven; then did they order long Fasts, and long Prayers, supplicating for Help to *Smite* (as the Prophet speaks) *the fiercer with the Fist of Iniquity*. Higher Reasons yet had the People for trusting the King in what he promised; for he was never known to break his Word to Friend or Enemy in any single Instance: And to shew the Enemy that he would not purchase Life itself at the Expence of his Royal Word, he refused to make his Escape out of the Isle of *Wight*, which he had a Power to have done; but he would not, because he promised not to attempt it. Thus does he deserve to have the Honour of his Royal Word, made Sacred to Enemies as well as Friends, stand (like the renowned Example of *Regulus*) upon Record in all History to the latest Posterity.

But all the Virtues of his private Life, together with the large Concessions he made for the publick Peace, bound over to the Enemy with the most solemn Protestations, would not secure him the Returns of Duty and Obedience: But the Case was, they had a Crime in their Judgments to lay to his Charge, which they were resolved never to forgive; the *Crime* was, that he loved the Established CHURCH: Therefore they carried on the War, not only to dethrone the King, but to destroy the Church, which he was resolved to protect by Royal Authority; and there was no other Way left at length for his Security, but to over-turn the Church by Royal Authority, or die a **Martyr** for it; and blessed be GOD that he chose the latter: For no doubt, would he have consented to the many Bills brought to him, highly injurious to the Honour of the Crown, and the very being of a Christian Church, chiefly to the utter excluding Bishops out of it; would he have taken into the Places of the Episcopal Clergy a Set of illiterate babbling Fellows, many of whom had neither Holy Orders, Loyalty, or Learning, he might have saved his Life, and remained a King, at least in Name.

Time

Time would fail me to number all that Series of Wickedness practised, before they brought on the **Murder** of this Day; and because all Wickedness, before it can rise very high, must be artfully disguised under the Colour of Virtue, therefore they took care to charm vulgar Ears with the Cause of Liberty, Property, and a better Reformation in Religion. Charms indeed these are, and worthy of all our best Respects; but it happened, as soon as the Trumpet was sounded for Rebellion under these glorious Colours, that nothing came out of their Hearts and Hands but Mischief, Violence, and Blood. For was it not monstrous to see those very Men who undertook to redress publick Grievances, in the very first Exercise of their own Power, to order the Twentieth Part of all the Estates in the Kingdom to be levied into their own Hands? Another Monster like this was, to vote every Man an Enemy to his Country who refused to take up Arms against the King; and because many Worthy Gentlemen in both Houses of Parliament refused to comply with such violent Steps, they drove them from Parliament by Force, as they had done before to Majesty Itself. What followed was only a Succession of Violence, higher and higher in every Step: Now they imprison, plunder, or destroy all Persons of Honour and Quality, without Process of Law, upon *Suspicion only* of Loyalty. In the Progress of the War, terrible it was to see not one Loyal House scarce without a Widow or an Orphan in it. To these Acts of Violence, the Church of *England* opposed all her Learning, and all her Strength; but Learning, Piety, and Truth, were of no Service to her: The Enemy was not to be reasoned with; it was a Generation of Men who had no Love of God in them, and would hear no Reason: When they could not answer Arguments, they would throw out reproachful Names, call every one that opposed them *Malignant* or *Papist*, and then leave them to an Enthusiastick Mob to tear them to Pieces: This was the Treatment her Bishops met with; no better their Clergy; for as many as escaped with Life were sent to seek their Bread in desolate Corners of this and other Kingdoms. Into their Places were called in a new Sort of Divines, *Divines* did I call them? but they were preaching Mechanicks, chiefly such whose Learning no one heard of before they pretended to the Gift of Preaching; nay whose very Faces, till they entered our Pulpits, had never been seen in the Church of God; and these did supply the Places of the True CLERGY

faithfully, I mean by filling the Churches of God, according to their Masters Orders, with Blasphemy, Profaneness, and Treason: They were Men that wore *Sanctified* Faces, whilst they corrupted the Scriptures to serve *the good old Cause* (as they termed it) of Rebellion and Murder.

From such Beginnings, we may imagine the rest; they proceeded from Iniquity to Iniquity, what with the Help of the Sword, what with the Help of many lying Preachers, what with an Army of Popish Priests taken into their Service, with all these and many other iniquitous Helps, to dissolve the whole Frame of our Constitution: And after they had perpetrated all Sorts of Violence in carrying on the War, for a Consummation of the Whole, they take Council now to destroy the King; but that is not to be done, till they labour first to destroy his Conscience: To that End they rudely press upon Majesty Itself, to declare Himself guilty of all the Mischiefs of the War; and because they knew before-hand the Good Man could not yield that Point to them, without manifest Breach of his Conscience, therefore they pressed that and many other scandalous Propositions upon him, not with Argument and Reason, but with the Point of the Sword.

And these were the Men that set out to fight for Liberty and Property, above all to establish a Liberty of Conscience for the Subject; but no sooner had they got Power into their Hands, but they made War upon every Man's Conscience, as well as Person, that were not of their own Side: They deny even Majesty itself that Right of Conscience, which in the Beginning of the War they justly asserted to belong to the meanest Subject.

I wish I could now leave off, for what I am obliged to speak further on this Day will make the Blood run chill. An *Englishman*, whilst he relates the History, is ashamed of his Country; nay, Humanity itself starts back at the Sight of that Cruelty which was contrived and executed in Human Nature: The Faith of History will scarce make late Posterity believe, that whilst the Enemy held the King in Prison they should deliberate whether to poison or assassinate him in cool Blood; but the major Part prevailed to destroy him through the Process of a *Mock-Trial*, to which End Judges were prepared, and Witnesses suitable to them: They charged Him with all the Calamities of the War; and after his Conscience had obstinately refused to yield that Point to the Enemy, He was condemned for Tyrant, Traytor, Murderer, had a Scaffold erected

erected for him before the Walls of his own Palace, had his Head cut off amidst the Tears and Cries of many Thousands of his Subjects then standing by, yet (through the Terror of the Army and Parliament) not daring to interpose for his Relief. *Weep not, O Daughters of Jerusalem, for the Death of this Good Man; but weep for yourselves, and your Children, lest all that Righteous Blood that was shed, from the Beginning of the late Troubles down to the ROYAL MARTYR of this Day, should be brought to Vengeance on you or your Posterity.*

One would imagine from the Treatment the King met with, either that he had outgon all the Tyrants of *Sicily* in Cruelty to his Country; or had set up nothing less than burning fiery Furnaces, with a Design to have burnt all his Subjects alive: And if nothing like this appeared from him, then must his Judges be *Monsters* in Human Nature; such as had either sucked of Lions or Wolves in their Minority, or had worne out in After-life all the benevolent Passions of Human Nature by accumulative Wickedness: And so it was; for when the List of them with the Witnesses came to be surveyed, they appeared to be Men, and that was all; bred they were to no Letters, nor under any Sense of Religion; Men they were, whose Memories have stunk many Years ago, and therefore it is below the Honour of this Place to recite their Names unto you: Colonels of the Army, chiefly from the meanest Mechanics; and such of them as had come out of any Families, were early a Disgrace to them; in Fortune Spendthrifts, Bankrupts; in Principle Blasphemers, Atheistical: Guilty they had been of all Vices to God, and Crimes to the State; such, in short, who could have had no Hopes to escape publick Justice, but by ministring to the Murder of their Lawful Sovereign: And had they been arraigned before him, as He was before them, (the *Vilest* of the People) and suffered in his Place, all the World at this Day, I am confident, had seen Reason to have applauded the Sentence.

And thus died one of the Wisest and Best of the **KINGS** of *England*, on whom Murder was committed in all its most barbarous Aggravations: In him one Man was not only murdered by another, but the **Best** of **Christians** by the *Worst* of *Men*; an **Hereditary Monarch**, by the *Vilest* of his Subjects; and lest his Soul should go out of this World with a well-grounded Hope of a better, they denied him the Use of his own Chaplains, with every other Friend that might have helped his Preparation for it: Thus did they de-
fire

fire to see him at once out of the Mercy of GOD, as well as Man; but, Thanks be to GOD, that the Malice of Man reacheth not beyond the Grave; for, as far as we can judge, his Soul went out of this World with as good a Title to Mercy, as any one in the Age wherein he lived; for, if History can be depended on in any Case, there was a Combination in Him of almost Everything that was Great and Good, with as few Faults as are ever seen in any one in these later degenerate Ages of the World.

It would be want of Respect to his Memory, did I not on this Day set before you some of the great Lines of his Glorious Character: He was so Honest a Man, that no Temptation could dispose him to do a wrongful Action; such a Temperature he had of Mercy with Justice, that he could never be charged with doing any hard-hearted one; so knowing in Religion, that he was fit to have been Archbishop as well as King; so observant withall in all the Offices of it, that nothing either in Business or Diversion could divert him from daily publick Worship of Almighty GOD; and from both these he retained such a Sense of Religion always in his Mind, that he never could bear the least light or prophane Word to be cast upon Religion in his Company without Reproof. Equally skilled he was in Civil as well as Divine Knowledge; in-somuch that no Divine excelled him in the one, nor any Lawyer in the other; and when he fell into Mistakes about Government, it was more often to be imputed to his Modesty, rather than any other Cause, which led him to trust others in Opinion less knowing than Himself. To all the substantial Parts of Knowledge, he added a great deal of the ornamental; such as Sculpture, Medals, Building, Painting; and in this Way there remain such Monuments of his fine Taste, as will ever be the Glory of the Kingdom, as well as the Honour of his Name.

Now if such a glorious Character as this is, and so well attested; if strict Honesty, joined with a noble Benignity of Temper, ever inclined to take the good-natured Side in all Actions and all Reports; if a Readiness to forgive the Failings of his Friends, and an equal Willingness to retract his own upon proper Application to him; if a perfect Knowledge of Religion, and a continued visible Practice in all the Offices of it; if a great Familiarity with all kind of real and ornamental Knowledge, joined to a perfectly modest Opinion of himself, will not secure such an one the real Respect and Honour of Posterity, then let no Man either in publick or private Life
ever

ever hope for it, at least in this Kingdom; where Party and Prejudice destroy all Truth, confound all real Distinctions of Right and Wrong, and leave Praise and Dispraise to fall not where they do, or do not deserve in Truth; but where Men love to bestow them rather, according to the corrupted Taste of a Party. But the most glorious and yet the least envied Part of his Character, is still behind; it was reserved for his last Sufferings in this World: There was indeed to be seen a Sight, *Spēctaculum Deo Dignum*; worthy (I hope I may say) for the GOD above to behold, as well as Man below; seen in a noble Mixture of Royal Grandeur and Christian Fortitude so well blended together, that in his extremest Pressures nothing could prevail with him to act Anything unbecoming either a Christian or a King: In the Bitterness of his Soul no bitter Expressions dropt from him, either against GOD or Man; but instead thereof copying Meekness, Patience, and Charity, from the Cross of his Master; like Him he resigned his Last Breath, praying for his *unrelenting Murderers*.

Here let his Enemies speak, if such remain in the World, from whence they can believe such a noble Temper in Sufferings could proceed, whether from Anything less than the highest Sense of Religion; true Religion inspiring a Belief into his Soul all the Time, that whatever unrighteous Treatment He met with from Man, still He was approved by GOD: And we are sure GOD did approve of our then Blessed Sovereign, because He lent him large Portions of Divine Grace to suffer withal; without which no Man upon Earth could have borne, with an equal Mind, what he did: And by this same Token we are assured, GOD approved the Cause for which He died; therefore in the Death of this Blessed **Martyr** we have not only the Testimony of one of the Best and Wisest Men of the Age wrote in **Blood**, that the CHURCH of *England* was the True Church in Opposition to Popery and all other *Seēts* that conspired his Ruin, but the Testimony of GOD along with his, in that He visibly lent him Divine Assistance to bear his Sufferings with, even to Death itself, for it.

And thus CHARLES I. becomes a **Martyr** of Blessed Memory, in whom were well united the noble Characters of a fine Gentleman, an excellent Scholar, a good Christian; and though He was made unhappy by a strange Concurrence of Causes, yet may it be truly said, that no other Prince was known to be so, who possessed Half his good Qualities with his small Share of Faults: And what

is more strange yet, He was intirely beloved by the Generality of his Subjects at the Time He suffered; as much or more than any of his Royal Predecessors had been. But so it was, God Almighty permitted this uncommon Event to happen, for some great Ends best known to Himself; who always can, and often does bring great Good out of great Evil. But for the Wickedness that was done, I hope there are none in the World so base born or bred as not to detest it; and that every *Englishman* now living, and in all succeeding Ages, will have so much Regard for his Country, as heartily on this Day to beseech Almighty GOD, never to bring the Vengeance due to his Righteous Blood on us or our Posterity; for of all the Wickedness that stands upon Record in *English* History, Nothing can exceed the **Murder** of CHARLES I, unless it be the Wickedness of those who shall have the Impudence to defend it.

What further remains, is to draw from the History before us some Remarks that may serve to direct our present Behaviour, and so conclude.

First then, whilst we reproach our Enemies for Want of Loyalty to a good King, and Duty to a most excellent Church, let us make it our especial Concern to *render unto Cæsar the Things that are Cæsar's, and unto GOD the Things that are GOD's.*

I mean to make it Matter of Conscience to pay all the Honour that is due to the Prince on the Throne, under whose Government none have suffered in their Rights by any Act of Power from Him; so far from it, that we are bound in Justice to declare that He makes the Laws of the Land the Measure of his Behaviour to all his Subjects.

To Him and his Family we owe (next under GOD) the present Security of all our Liberties, and the Hopes of our future Continuance in them: For to whom else can we intrust them with Safety? The History of the Times before us shews us plainly, that no other Form of Government will long please this Nation, but the Regal. Nor is there any other Branch of the Royal Family to whom we could commit ourselves in Safety, either as Free-born Subjects or *Protestants*, but to His present Majesty, and his Protestant Heirs after him.

Under His most gracious Protection, all former Jealousies and Fears are at an End, the Established CHURCH is easie and safe from

from his Royal Word so often pledged for her Security, Provision made by Law for the *Dissenters* by a Toleration envied them by none, and Popery no longer a Terror to any of us.

To this honourable Thought of our Civil Governors in general, let us go on candidly to interpret all their publick Actions; ever believing all Things are done by them for the Best, till we are sure of the contrary: This Piece of Charity in Thinking, every one owes to his Neighbour in private Life; much more do we all owe it to our Governors, placed with Divine Authority over us. For how can little Politicians, in little private Life, judge truly of all the arduous Affairs of Government, who have not the great Matters in Question laid before them? If such are resolved to busie themselves in Matters above their Reach, there is but one Way to be safe, which is to take Side with their Governors; for if they give wrong Judgment against them, or censure without Reason, let me tell such they offend against the Laws both of GOD and Man, and incur the Penalties threatned by GOD to disobedient Subjects.

Next to the Civil Powers, let us not forget to pay our Duty to the Ecclesiastical: Here Power comes from GOD, as well as on the other Part, though it differs in the Manner of its Administration; whereupon the Penalties of the next World may be incurred, for want of Duty to the one as well as the other. The History therefore of this Day should remind us of our Duty to the Established CHURCH, for which the **Royal Martyr** shed his **Blood**: His Blood shed calls upon you to love the Established Church if you can, that is to love it for the Reasons he did, which are because the Form of its Government is proved beyond Contradiction to be from CHRIST and his Apostles; and if ours is the true Form, no other can be so too, unless Christ appointed more than one Form of Government for his Church, which no one ever yet pretended to say. You are required likewise to love the Established Church, because her Doctrines are plainly founded on the written Word of GOD, and nothing else; and because the Discipline CHRIST intrusted her with is wholesome, yet mild withal: It hurts no one's Body, whilst it intends to mend Men's Manners, and *save their Souls in the Day of the LORD JESUS*. If there are any amongst us that cannot intirely conform to such a Church, they can (if they please) behave respectfully to her, talk of her with good Manners, and not repine to see her in Prosperity; so much they are bound

In Duty to do, under the Penalties of the next World: But besides these Reasons, She hath others to recommend her to her Enemies which no other Church hath in the World besides; which are, that she allows a Right of private Judgment to every one in Matters of Religion: She damns no one who sincerely differs from her in Opinion, but leaves the final Judgment of every one's sincere Mistakes in Opinion to be determined by the unerring Judgment of GOD: Further yet, she commits the BIBLE into every one's Hand, to examine by private Judgment whether her Doctrines are agreeable to the written Word of GOD or no: And when sincerely good and well-meaning People cannot assent to her Judgment, she never murmurs at the *Toleration* granted to such, provided they keep within the Bounds prescribed by Law. All these are plain Marks of an extensive Charity, infallible Signs at the same Time that she hath a great deal of real and true Goodness in her; and if such a Church is ever to fall into Ruins again, it must be in a Generation of Men like the former, who can first trample upon Sacred Majesty Itself, and with Him upon Everything that is Sacred whether in Divine or Human Law: In short, if such a Thing shall ever happen again, it must be from those who have no Love of God, and will hearken to no Truth or Reason. But I hope it will be found true, what the greatest * Scholar in his own, or perhaps any other Time said of her, though he was not of her Communion, "That of all the Churches then subsisting in the World, the CHURCH of England he was sure would stand the longest, because she was both in Doctrine and Discipline the fairest Transcript of the written Word of GOD." And this one unprejudiced Judgment of so great a Man, is more worth than Ten Thousand Pages of little prejudiced Writers on the other Side.

In short, whilst we are lamenting over the Follies and Vices of the Times past, let us learn from thence to proclaim our own Abhorrence of all Rebellion, Murmuring, and Repining at our Civil Governors. In like Manner let the Enemies of our Church either prove that she is faulty in any Respect, or let them behave with good Manners to her, and be sure to do her no Wrong. But whatever our Notions in Religion are, I hope all of us will detest *Lying*, detest *Hypocrisie* in the Heart, lurking under *Sanctified Faces*;

* The Learned GROTIUS.

and what is equally bad, *Prophaneness*, and open *Scorning* at Religion: If we fall into either one or the other of these, we make the Guilt of the afore Times our own; and do but mock GOD, when we beseech Him on this Day *not to bring the Vengeance due to our Forefathers on us or our Posterity*.

Once more: From the History of the 'Times before us, we see the Peace and Welfare of the Kingdom depends not only on the Temper of the King, but on the other Parts of the Legislature equally with his: This should teach us all, who have a 'Trust lodged with us of Electing Guardians for the Community, that we dispose of this Trust with no other View but the Good of the Community: Honour, Conscience, and the Welfare of the Kingdom, are all concerned in an honourable Execution of this Trust; and the Man, whoever he is, that takes Counsel from private Gain, or Anything else but Conscience and sincere Love to his Country, in the Disposal of this Trust, as far as in him lies, stands chargeable with the damnable Sin of intending to murder the Constitution.

Now if we would learn Wisdom from former Calamities, we may know from thence that none are so fit to be Elected the Guardians of our publick Liberties and Religion, as those we sincerely believe to be very Good Men; I mean, as those we see practising Religion, as well as talking of it: For the *most wicked Men* in former Times we saw could talk of Religion and Liberty mighty well to the People, till they had even cut off the King's Head, and laid the Best of Churches in Ruin. In our own Times we hear Men talk of nothing so much as their *Honour*, But are all Men of real Honour that pretend to it? if not, let us try them by these Rules: Do they live in the Fear of GOD, and in all the Ways of a visible Religion? Has their Notion of *Honour* a real Sense of Moral Honesty joined with it? Particularly, do they make it an especial Mark of *Honour* to pay private Debts? If they are wanting in any of these sure Marks of Honour, can we believe they will make it a Mark of their Honour to discharge a Debt conscientiously to the Publick? Or can we believe any Man will be steadily inclined to follow the TRUTH in publick Matters, (as far as he shall sincerely apprehend it) who first shews us that he regards no Virtue, nor scruples any Vice in private Life? Divide Honour from Virtue, and you see there is nothing in it; a Patriot without a visible Religion, and a practical Moral Honesty,

is a Contradiction: Remember therefore this Truth from me, that a truly Honest Man, in the Sense of Morality and a visible Religion, is only the Man of Honour to be depended on; such a one indeed is worthy of our highest Regard, he stands in Life at the Top of the Creation, is the noblest Work of God in this World; but let a Man's other Talents be never so shining, yet if his Religion shines not equally bright with the rest, we should not think such an one worthy of any great Trust in private Life, much less ought we to think any one so with Regard to the publick.

To conclude: As all those who divided from the CHURCH of *England*, generally joined with the Enemy in over-turning the Constitution both in Church and State, so would the Children of such express a real Concern for the Sins of their Forefathers, the best Way of doing that is, by being in their own Times exceedingly mild and gentle in their Behaviour to all Lawful Authority, whether it be in Church or State: Such, instead of murmuring and complaining for want of more Favours, ought to be very thankful to the Civil Powers for what they shall please to grant them, from Time to Time, be they more or less: For they cannot imagine but that the Established CHURCH will always look with a jealous Eye at any additional Strength, whether in the Hands of *Papist* or *Seſtary*; because both of them, in their Turns, when they have had it in their Power, have taught the Established CHURCH to expect no Mercy from either one or the other of them.

From either *Papist* or *Seſtary* there ought to be no Complaint against the Civil Powers, because they see a larger Portion of Favours go down with the Established CHURCH than in any other Channel; for were there no other Reason, Is not this a very sufficient one, that the Civil Powers have an absolute Right to do what they will with their own? Or if the Civil Powers do in Conscience prefer the Way of Worship in the Established Form to any other, May they not grant their best Favours along with their best Opinion? It is hard if they cannot exercise such a plain Right, without Complaint from any one; for they do no more here, than every private Man does in the Kingdom besides; every Man grants his own Favours where he pleases. But if any Set of Men think they are injured of any Right, because they cannot have what Favours they please, and in what Manner they please too, from the State, let them shew, before they complain, that they are robbed of any Right either Natural or Civil; and till they can do that, it is their Duty to forbear all Sort of Murmurs and Complaints. In

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In a Word, whilst all *Sects* and Sides are labouring to have their own Forms of Religion approved by the State, each Side should remember first to make, every one, his own Religion yield what Benefit it can to the Service of the State. We should All contend, who shall excel most in quiet Obedience to the PRINCE on the Throne, who shall be most thankful for the innumerable Blessings we All enjoy from the Happy Administration; though we differ in other Matters, there is no Room to be divided here: To this happy Union in Loyalty, let us not fail to join the most excellent Virtue of Charity to one another, both of equal Importance to the publick Peace. And let me tell ye All, if we are wanting in Good Nature, Forbearance, or Charity to one another, none of us have any Religion to Purpose; nay, after all the unwearied Pains our Governors shall take to please all Sides, it must be these social Virtues, greatly joined with the Love of our Governors, that must make us All happy, and live in Peace: Such Virtues bring their own Happiness along with them, and to their own natural Fruits they bring the Blessings of GOD upon us; and upon the Help of GOD, and His alone, must we All depend at last, under every Extremity of Danger. *To Whom, with the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed, as is most due, all Honour and Glory, evermore.*

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